

Application No. 09/575,552

Docket No. 22-0099

Amendments to the Specification

Please amend the Abstract of the Disclosure as follows:

A method and apparatus ~~are provided~~ for scheduling, in real-time, the order in which data packets from multiple ~~a plurality of~~ uplink channels 40-55 are organized in a downlink channel 60 of a satellite communications network 5. The satellite 40 includes uplink and downlink channels for conveying data packets over channels between user terminals 15-30, ground stations 35 and other user terminals. Queues 104-110 in the satellite 40 collect data packets from uplinks 40-55 and output the data packets to the downlink 60 using a bandwidth that is dynamically allocated. A scheduler 152 allocates the bandwidth to at least one queue 104-110 and continuously changes the amount of bandwidth allocated to each active queue 104-110 while the queue 104-110 is buffering data packets between the uplinks 40-55 and downlink 60. The scheduler 152 allocates bandwidth based upon a priority-class packet service schedule 200 calculated based upon traffic parameters associated with each active queue 104-110 (steps 306 and 308).